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Social Science Division

Division Minutes

4-25-2012

Social Science Division meeting minutes 04/25/2012

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**Social Science Division
Faculty Meeting of Salaried individuals
(Tenured, Tenure-Track, Multi-Year contracts & Steve Gross)
April 25th, 2012
5:30 pm
Imholte Room 217**

Present: Chair Leslie Meek, Kent Blansett, Ed Brands, Sheri Breen, Steve Burks, Donna Chollett, Rebecca Dean, Solomon Gashaw, Farah Gilanshah, Roland Guyotte, Seung-Ho Joo, Arne Kildegaard, Nick Leonard, Elaine Nelson, Paula O'Loughlin, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Roger Rose, Cheryl Stewart, Dennis Stewart, Marynel Ryan Van Zee, Sheng Xiao, Xia Zhang

Faculty excused: Heather Peters (another meeting), Stefanek (daycare), Johnson (working with Sr Sem students)

Faculty on leave: Jennifer Deane (sabbatical), Jennifer Rothchild (one semester TC fellowship), J. Brooks Jessup (leave of absence), and Bart Finzel (recused due to position as Dean)

Division Chair Leslie Meek called the meeting to order at 5:31.

Chair Meek explained that it has been mandated by the University of Minnesota since 1997 that all University of Minnesota colleges/units are required to have some sort of merit salary policy. A document was produced by the Policy Committee last year, but that document was not approved by the Division. As the Policy Committee has come up with a new document, the duty of the tenured faculty is to discuss said document. Meek then asked Policy Committee Chair Roland Guyotte to outline the Committee's process.

Guyotte: Basically, we have been asked to write up criteria for merit salary increases. The Committee (made up of Paula O'Loughlin, Arne Kildegaard, Marynel Ryan Van Zee, and Guyotte) attempted to reflect, in the document, the diversity of disciplines: their standards, publishable units, etc. This diversity is reflected in the document's research category.

Additionally, Guyotte brought up two suggestions that had been proposed to the Committee:

1. A note should be put in the document to indicate that if there is a period of time between raises, then a person's merit ranking should be dated back to the last year of raises rather than the current year.
 - a. Otherwise someone who published a book between raise periods (but not within the year) would get no credit.
2. The second suggestion dealt with the document's teaching category: how should supervision of student research be calculated? Should there be a numerical rating?

Donna Chollett began the conversation by proposing that a different proportion might be appropriate for the teaching, research, and service categories, as research was weighted at 40% (which was less than the University's standard). Donna suggested changing the proportion to either 40 (teaching), 50 (research), 10 (service) or 45, 45, 10.

Marynel Ryan Van Zee: My only reservation is the fact that once you pass tenure there's a heavier service requirement. 10% is not sufficient for that requirement. People who pass tenure often feel responsibility to take on more in that department so that people who don't have tenure don't have to do as much.

Chollett: Why not give external grants greater weight as well?

Chair Meek: None of these things are weighted as far as I can tell.

Guyotte: No, there is no weighting. We added external grants to the other two, because the draft from last year had not included that.

Chair Meek: To me that's one of the issues with this document; there is no weighting whatsoever. Do you have to be doing all of these things to get a raise? Just some of them? Some combination of them?

Guyotte: The intent of the Committee was not to require, but to suggest these things. The document's vagueness is deliberate in order to take diversity into account. What we have done might not necessarily be on this list, otherwise.

Meek: Donna, would you be comfortable if we made external grants its own bullet point?

Chollett: Yes.

Steve Burks: I want to remind everyone of our conversation last year. Last year, we had a specific numerically-weighted template. There was consensus among the faculty that we didn't want that. We wanted categories listed, but we wanted the Chair to exercise judgment, and to realize that everyone doesn't do the same things. The merit comes from doing well in some way in each of these areas.

Dennis Stewart: Did we vote on that?

Burks: Yes, we voted down the numerical weighting.

D. Stewart: Even if we voted it down, it doesn't mean we objected entirely to weighting, maybe just to specific weights.

Burks: It's reasonable to have weights for the general areas, but we objected to having weights on external vs. internal grants.

Chair Meek: That's my understanding as well, having talked to people within the Division.

Chollett: In the service category, is a tenure-track search committee considered more important than a non-tenure track?

Guyotte: Sometimes a non-tenure track search committee is more casual, and entails less work.

Chair Meek: Instead of dividing into tenure track and non-tenure track committees, it can just say that the faculty member chaired a search committee.

Chollett: Another question I have concerns the academic review committee. Why does the section include work done outside one's own discipline?

Guyotte: Inside one's own discipline is the expected work area. Working outside of one's discipline means going above and beyond.

Ratliff-Crain: Related to student research: It's the extra, outside of classroom work (internships, directed studies, etc.) that refers to teaching time that we don't necessarily count with regular teaching.

Chair Meek: Would you put that under teaching and advising?

Guyotte: How about this: "Supervising outside of class activities including directed studies, internships, etc."

Arne Kildegaard: I thought in principle, we've been trying not to encourage people to do that?

Ratliff-Crain: I would hope people would be rewarded for doing that kind of work.

Seung-Ho Joo: In the first paragraph, last sentence: "performance that does not meet superior..." My suggestion is to prioritize these lists. Not weighted, but in ranked, numerical terms. Book publication is more important than a conference presentation, for example.

Guyotte: I think the spirit of what the committee was doing was allowing for options rather than foreclosing options. At another college, for example, the sociology discipline ranks articles over books in their criteria. I still think we like things that a peer reviewed, but beyond that, we don't agree on all that much. Our proposal puts a lot of trust in the Chair, but also offers a set of guidelines to our members.

Burks: One thing this approach does, is to require the Chair to become familiar with the standards in every discipline. I think that's a reasonable thing to ask of the Chair.

Chair Meek: What happens if you have a Chair who's not as fair and just as I am?

Guyotte: We impeach her.

Chair Meek: I don't have a rubric to follow, so you're all free to come in and complain, because how did I decide on that raise? People will think it's not fair. To protect myself, I want a rubric.

C. Stewart: Does this raise really apply to me even though I'm on long-term contract?

Chair Meek: Yes; I clarified with the Dean. That's why anyone who returns has to do an annual review.

Paula O'Loughlin: It's not what the Chair wants that matters, it's who has more evidence under each category. This document allows us to reward breadth.

Chair Meek: If you leave it up to me, I will be fair and I will be just, but how do you know my standards aren't skewed? How do you know that the weighting of things in my own mind isn't different than your idea of weight?

O'Loughlin: The other option is to do this for two years and then to revisit it. I think people don't know how much they will complain until they try it.

Chair Meek: If we did it for two years, in the middle of that period would be a midterm review of my performance. If people were unhappy it would come out there.

Kildegaard: We invest a lot of time in choosing a Chair, of choosing a figure to make such decisions. It's not a great idea for us to restrict their ability to make decisions. We should let the Chair exercise mature academic judgment.

Chair Meek: If I'm bad at this, however, you have no recourse except to go to the Dean to complain. Also, I'm astonished at the amount of research we have in this division. How will I choose between you guys?

Ratliff-Crain: I think there will be subjectivity no matter what. We seem to be at some level of agreement as to what our priorities are, and what people should achieve in each category.

Chair Meek: I thought Humanities, who's document is like ours was last year, had passed it. It hasn't passed, though; It's just sitting there, and Janet has been using it because she doesn't have anything else.

Joo: I second Paula's suggestion; we can revisit this and revise it in two or three years.

Ratliff-Crain: I move to approve the document with the addition of those outside-of-class items.

D. Stewart: Knowing that we'll revisit it in two years?

Guyotte: I would add Heather Peters' suggestion about taking into account recent accomplishments.

Ratliff Crain moved to approve the document, Roger Rose seconded.

Solomon Gashaw: Regarding chairing committees, I'm not against it, but whoever appoints the chair was to be biased. Individual faculty's appointments to those positions aren't based on merit.

Ryan Van Zee: Membership Committee appoints all chairs of regular campus committees.

Gashaw: Yes, but I'm talking about search committees.

Ryan Van Zee: There are ways in which people are chosen based on the constitution of the committee (who's served on it before). But it's not just one person, or just administration who decide.

Chair Meek: No one is fighting to take over search committees, believe me.

A unanimous vote approved the document, with aforementioned changes.

Chair Meek adjourned the meeting at 6:07.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Holly Gruntner, Morris Student Administrative Fellow